



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Nov. 1, 2007

For immediate release

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FEEDLOT RUNOFF REACHES STREAM – DNR CAUTIONS ALL MANURE APPLICATORS

MEDIA CONTACT: Ken Hessenius or Jeff Prier, Spencer DNR Field Office, (712) 262-4177.

ROCK RAPIDS – Manure runoff from the Rock Rivers Feedyards owned by Del and Randy Grooters reached a creek in Lyon County after soils became saturated during land application Wednesday.

The DNR received a complaint of manure runoff about the same time Wednesday afternoon that beef producer Randy Grooters discovered manure runoff in a field he was irrigating. He had checked the center pivot irrigation system earlier in the day, but by 1:30 p.m. the soils were so saturated, the manure-laden runoff was flowing overland towards the stream.

Grooters immediately turned the irrigation system off and began building temporary berms to capture the manure flow. However, he was unaware that manure was also soaking through the soil and entering underground tile lines, then flowing out of the tile lines into a channelized waterway towards nearby Mud Creek.

“There’s a lesson here for all producers,” said Ken Hessenius, coordinator of animal feeding enforcement for DNR field offices. “We’ve had a lot of rainfall this fall and soils can be near saturation, tiles are running and people land applying manure need to make sure they aren’t applying too many gallons at any one time.”

Hessenius suggested that applicators check the application area frequently during land application and inspect field tiles downhill from the area. He also advised applicators to delay manure application if soils are wet or rain is expected. If manure storage is full and land application can’t be accomplished without runoff, Hessenius said producers should call their regional DNR field office for suggestions.

In this case, the producers were following the nutrient management plan and had applied about 88,500 gallons of feedlot effluent per acre since Oct. 20.

“While that’s nowhere near enough nitrogen to supply a corn crop, that’s still roughly equivalent to three and one-half inches of rainfall,” said Jeff Prier, who investigated the complaint. “Under these wet conditions that was simply more liquid than the soil could absorb.”

Prier said he is not expecting a fish kill and thinks there will be a minimal impact to the stream, because the liquid manure was very dilute and ammonia levels in the stream were only slightly elevated below the lot.

The 7,000-head beef open feedlot is located about five miles west of Rock Rapids. The DNR will continue to investigate the incident.

Manure releases should be reported to the DNR 24-hour spill line within six hours after discovery or onset of the spill. The spill line number is (515) 281-8694. The call will be referred to an environmental specialist experienced in spill response.

Writer: Karen Grimes

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BROKEN HOSE LEADS TO CHEROKEE COUNTY MANURE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT: Nate Young at (712) 260-0574 or Ken Hessenius at (712) 262-4177.

CHEROKEE — The DNR is investigating a manure release north of Cherokee in Cherokee County on Thursday.

Calumet Manure Management, of Calumet, was applying hog manure from the Jack Bernhardt hog confinement when the release began at 5:00 p.m. Wednesday. The release began when a coupling broke on the umbilical hose being used to pump manure.

The manure traveled about 100 yards before entering an unnamed tributary to Mill Creek. Calumet Manure Management reported the release to the DNR at 5:45 p.m., saying 1,000 to 1,200 gallons had reached the stream. Upon investigation, the DNR estimates up to 3,000 gallons may have been released, although the exact amount is not known. The release ended around 5:15 p.m. Wednesday.

“The applicator did not have a contingency plan in case something like this happened,” said Nate Young of the DNR’s Spencer field office. “Whenever crossing a water body with a hose or pumping near one, applicators need to use extra caution and have a backup plan. In this case, had there been a plan, the impact could have been greatly reduced.”

The DNR is continuing its investigation on Thursday, searching for any impacts to Mill Creek. The DNR may consider additional enforcement action.

Writer: Jessie Brown

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMISSION TO MEET NOVEMBER 7 NEAR CEDAR RAPIDS

MEDIA CONTACT: Karen Grimes at (515) 281-5135

DES MOINES – Because of elections on Tuesday, the Environmental Protection Commission will meet Nov. 7 in Cedar Rapids.

The regular meeting will be preceded by tours and presentations on Tuesday starting at 3 p.m. at the Baymont Hotel, 1222 Park Place NE in Cedar Rapids.

The first tour will start with storm water demonstration sites, followed by a presentation on solar arrays. Commissioners will then visit the former site of the Sinclair/Wilson Foods Packing Plant which is being redeveloped using the DNR’s Brownfields funds.

The evening will end with dinner at 6:30 p.m. at Biaggi’s, 320 Collins Road NE.

At their business meeting on Wednesday, commissioners will be asked to approve a contract that could help Iowans safely dispose of prescription and over-the-counter drugs. If approved, Iowans in the 15-county pilot project will have the opportunity to properly manage and dispose of unused, excess, old or seized pharmaceuticals. Collected drugs would be incinerated, preventing them from reaching Iowa waters.

The commission’s business meeting will start at 9 a.m. It will be held at the Wickiup Hill Outdoor Learning Center, 10260 Morris Hills Road in Toddville, north of Cedar Rapids. Public participation is scheduled for 10:30 a.m. Flying J, Inc., has an appointment with the commission at 11 a.m.

The full agenda is as follows:

- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Minutes
- Director's Remarks
- Contract - Pharmaceutical Contract - Metro Waste Authority
- Contract - Geologic Drilling - Aquadrill, Inc.
- Final Rule - Chapter 60 - Scope of Title-Definitions-Forms-Rules of Practice, Chapter 62 - Effluent and Pretreatment Standards, Chapter 63 - Monitoring, Analytical and Reporting Requirements
- Referrals to the Attorney General
 - a. Flying J, Inc. / CFJ Properties / CFJ Plaza Co. II, LLC (Clive) – Wastewater and Underground Storage Tank
 - b. Flying J, Inc. (Davenport) - Wastewater
- Proposed Rule – Amendments to Chapter 135, Technical Standards and Corrective Action Requirements for Owners and Operators of Underground Storage Tanks
- Proposed Rule: Chapters 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, and 33, Air Quality Program Rules - Updates, Revisions, and Additions
- Proposed Rule - Chapter 64 --- Wastewater Construction and Operation Permits
- Monthly Reports
- General Discussion
- Items for Next Month's Meeting
 - a. Dec. 4, 2007 in Des Moines
 - b. Jan. 1, 2008 in Des Moines

More information about the agenda items can be found on the DNR Web site under Commissions and Boards at www.iowadnr.gov.

The members of the commission are Darrell Hanson, chair, Manchester; Mary Gail Scott, vice chair, Cedar Rapids; Suzanne Morrow, secretary, Storm Lake; Charlotte Hubbell, Des Moines; Henry Marquard, Muscatine; David Petty, Eldora; Ralph Klemme, LeMars; Susan Heathcote, Des Moines; and Paul Johnson, Decorah. The director of the DNR is Richard Leopold.

Writer: Karen Grimes

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DNR MOVES FORWARD ON WATER QUALITY STANDARDS, MEETS WITH CITIES AND INDUSTRIES STATEWIDE

MEDIA CONTACTS: Lori McDaniel at (515) 281-8094.

DES MOINES — A recent series of meetings focused on changes to Iowa's water quality standards and the effects they will have on cities and businesses discharging treated wastewater to state streams.

The six meetings across the state led to important dialogue on how Iowa will implement significant changes to stream classifications in its water quality standards. The DNR made the changes last year to meet requirements of the federal Clean Water Act.

Part of those changes was to presume that all streams deserve the highest classification and the highest level of protection. Over the last year, the DNR has conducted stream assessments to determine what stream classification is most appropriate for those streams. These stream studies can change the level of protection on some streams, which will affect how some cities and industries will need to treat effluent being released to Iowa streams.

In the meetings, the DNR addressed concerns of cities and businesses that may face stricter permit requirements when new water quality standards go into effect. While many expressed concern over cost and timelines, most felt it was their duty to protect those that use the water downstream of their outfall pipes and were ready to move forward, according to Adam Schnieders of the DNR.

"People at the meeting left with a much better idea of what's happening, why it's happening, when and how is this all going to impact them, and a knowledge that we're here to assist," said Schnieders, who is working on the DNR's water quality standards.

The meetings were held in partnership with the Iowa Rural Water Association and the Iowa League of Cities, with 175 people representing 148 cities, industries and organizations attending.

"I am extremely gratified with what was accomplished in these meetings and the fact that we were able to have positive dialogue with the public," said Rich Leopold, director of the DNR. "When we can all focus on the need to improve water quality, the ensuing discussion often leads us to exciting and innovative solutions to the challenges we face."

Some facilities may need to make minor to major upgrades on their facilities in coming years to meet new permit limits. These new permits will further limit the amount of pollutants entering Iowa's streams and rivers.

The DNR has begun rulemaking efforts to formally make changes to use designations for a number of Iowa streams and rivers.

For more information on water quality standards, visit the DNR's Web site at www.iowadnr.gov/water/standards/.

Writer: Jessie Brown

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PUBLIC'S HELP NEEDED TO IMPROVE RACCOON RIVER; PUBLIC MEETINGS ANNOUNCED

MEDIA CONTACT: Chris Van Gorp at (515) 281-4791 or
Chris.VanGorp@dnr.iowa.gov

DES MOINES — From Jefferson to Guthrie Center, from Sac City to Des Moines – the DNR is seeking your suggestions, comments and questions on improving water quality in the Raccoon River.

While the river may not run directly through your town or farm, you may still live in the river's watershed. A watershed, also called a river basin, is an area of land that drains into a river or stream. Making improvements in smaller streams and changing how land is managed in the watershed can make a difference in the river.

The DNR has developed a water quality improvement plan for the Raccoon River. The DNR will hold four public meetings in the watershed to explain the DNR's findings and what needs to be done to improve the river. The DNR will also answer questions and accept comments on the plan. The meetings will be held:

Guthrie Center:

Nov. 8, 1:30 p.m., Springbrook Education Center (north of Guthrie Center on F-25)

Jefferson:

Nov. 7, 7:00 p.m., Greene County Community Center, 204 W. Harrison

Sac City:

Nov. 7, 1:30 p.m., Sac City Community Recreation Center, 1015 W. Main St.

West Des Moines

Nov. 8, 6:30 p.m., Raccoon River Park Nature Lodge, 2500 Grand Ave.

Portions of the Raccoon River are impaired by high levels of bacteria and nitrates. High levels of bacteria can cause people recreating in the rivers to become sick. Elevated nitrate levels can cause problems with using the rivers as a drinking water source, including high costs for treatment. The Raccoon is one drinking water source used by thousands of people in the Des Moines metro area. The DNR's improvement plan found that 90 percent of water quality problems in the Raccoon River come from nonpoint sources. Nonpoint source pollution, especially sediment, nutrients and bacteria, washes into the Raccoon River from wide areas like farm fields, forested lands and urban areas.

However, the situation cannot be fixed without the help of people upstream who can address the water quality in their local streams. Citizen involvement is critical to achieve water quality goals in these watersheds and across the state.

With the help of Iowans, the DNR is developing water quality improvement plans, also known as a Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), to address waters across the state considered “impaired.” The DNR calculates how much of a pollutant a water body can receive and still maintain its designated use such as maintaining aquatic life, allowing body contact such as swimming or being used as a drinking water supply.

The plan also suggests ways Iowans can improve the Raccoon River. The DNR works with local groups to form watershed projects that put the water quality improvement plan into action.

For more information on water quality improvement plans and watershed projects, visit the DNR’s watershed Web site at <http://watershed.iowadnr.gov>.

Writer: Jessie Brown